

VOL. I.

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EARLY LOCALS.

Mr. J. K. P. LEAG was in town Monday.

Mr. Jas. W. Fox left last week for Louisville, Ky.

W. S. LOTSCH was registered at the Central Saturday.

GEN. A. L. PRIDEMORE came up from Jonesville Sunday.

JUDGE E. M. FULTON spent several days in town last week.

R. A. BROWN and C. E. BIBBS came down from Dorchester Saturday.

DR. AND MRS. STALLARD, of Dryden, came up to the Gap Sunday.

MESS. H. H. BULLITT and W. A. McDOWELL left last Friday night for Louisville.

REV. S. R. PRESTON will preach next Sunday, in City Hall, morning and evening.

MR. E. WRIGHT NELSON, after a long absence, has returned to Big Stone Gap.

MISS DUDLEY, of Louisville, sister of Mrs. W. A. McDowell, is visiting friends here.

DR. J. C. PRUNER will be found in his rooms, at Central hotel till Friday. All in need of dental work should give him a call.

CAPT. A. B. EATON spent Sunday with his family, at Bristol. Tom Barker did the "tickets here!" act for him on the "jimmy."

W. S. BEVERLY, the popular telegraph operator, went up to the "connecting point of the N. & W. and L. & N. railroads" Monday.

PRESIDENT BIRD, of the furnace, gives it as his opinion that there will be more foreign capital invested in the south this year than has ever been invested in any one year heretofore, and that Big Stone Gap can reasonably expect her pro rata.

MR. W. FRANK SMITH, representing the Chamberlain Medicine Co., of Des Moines, Iowa, was in town last Saturday, and while here perfected an arrangement with Dr. J. W. Kelly to handle the popular line of proprietary medicines manufactured by his company.

THE Conversation Club held its Saturday night's meeting at Gen'l Ayer's residence. The subject before the club for discussion was "Dreams." Quite a number of the members present expressed a belief in the crazy-mazy ideas that fit through a disturbed brain, as it occupies the half-conscious position between sound slumber and full wakefulness, while other thought "it was altogether owing to whether there was really anything in dreams or not as to whether there was really anything in dreams," after which the club retired to dream.

A "cyclone" struck the town last Thursday evening. Its sudden appearance created no little excitement and uneasiness among those who really knew what it was, and realized the fearful results, in case they were struck by it. Assistant postmaster Jesse, Bent Kilbourn and Gus Lovell appeared to more fully realize the pending danger than anyone else, and were very active in their efforts to ward off trouble. Clack Robinson was not here at the time, but it is thought he encountered the same "cyclone" somewhere before it reached this point. It was "Cyclone Jim" Marshall that hit the town, and it is understood that he is undecided as to which three of the above named applicants for the "post-office shop" at this place he will demolish in the general wreck of men and office-seekers.

THE \$30 Guitars Offered by the Post to the Most Popular Lady in Four Counties Going for a Song, With Indications that the Song will be Done by the Post.

As will be noticed in this issue of the Post, as yet but little interest has been shown in the contest for the fine \$30 guitar that is offered by the Post to the most popular lady in the counties of Lee, Scott and Wise, in Virginia, or Letcher county, Ky., and from all indications the chivalry and gallantry of the gentlemen of the territory named, and their appreciation of their lady friends would not make a very favorable display at the Columbian exposition. The 25th of next month the instrument will be awarded to the lady receiving the largest number of votes, let the number be what it may. See full explanation as to the manner in which it is to be given away in another column.

Maj. W. C. Harrington Able to be Moved from the Interment to His Poplar Hill Residence.

Owing to the serious nature of Maj. Harrington's wound, on the 8th, at the Interment, it was thought unwise by his physicians to attempt to carry him to his residence, on Poplar Hill. He has been at the hotel till Sunday evening last, when, owing to his greatly improved condition, Dr. Kunkel decided the move would not injure his patient; so he was gently carried by some of his friends from the hotel to his residence. He was as jolly and jovial as ever, and said he enjoyed the ride more than any he had taken for many a day. On entering the hallway he requested that the "band play Home, Sweet Home."

Southern Iron Interests.

The returns from manufactures to the American Iron and Steel Association, show that the total production of pig iron in the United States in 1892 was 9,157,000 gross tons, against 7,279,870 tons in 1891, and 9,202,703 in 1890. The production in 1892 was only 45,703 tons less than in 1890, the year of maximum production. The extraordinary activity which had marked the second half of 1891 was but slightly checked in the first half of 1892, but in the second half of 1892 the decline was much more and indications point to its continuance.

The production of pig iron in 1892 by the nine Southern States of Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Texas, West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee was 1,890,167 gross tons, against 1,708,966 tons in 1891, and 1,744,160 tons in 1890. The production in 1892 was the largest the Southern States have yet reached, being 46,007 gross tons in excess of the very large production in 1890.

According to a recent bulletin upon the iron and steel industries of the Southern States, issued by the census office at Washington, there are twelve Southern States now engaged in developing their mineral resources by the establishment of rolling mills and steel works, viz: Alabama, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia. The capital invested in blast furnaces in these States increased from about \$17,000,000 in 1880 over \$33,000,000 in 1890. In rolling mills and steel works the increase was from \$11,500,000 in 1880 to \$17,500,000 in 1890. The products of these works increased from 290,000 to 515,000 tons the increase being exclusively in steel.

Coming Back to Coal.

Reliable information from the natural gas fields of Ohio, Indiana and Pennsylvania, proves that the failure of the natural gas supply of that section of the country is no longer a subject of speculation, and that the only uncertainty about it is the amount of time which will elapse before it is complete. The future of natural gas is, however, but a matter of short duration, and when it does go the manufactories which have been led through the cheap fuel argument to establish themselves in that section will drift to the large coal fields of the South in order to get an abundance of cheap fuel and at the same time approach more closely the base of their trade which now is Alabama, and when the Nicaragua canal is completed the advantage of a location in this State will be a very decided one. Already large glass factories are seeking coal locations in coal fields, and many other industries of similar needs will follow in anticipation of the gas fires under their boilers being exhausted. It is this situation that gives Alabama one of her brightest prospects. It will be only a short time in history till the North will again drift back to agriculture, and manufacturing will find its field upon the large and lasting coal and iron beds of which Alabama is especially abundant. There is every argument to prove that it is in the nature of sound business sense of the growing towns of this section, and large iron and coal fields, to be on the lookout of these valuable wayfarers, who, like the bedouins of the desert, seek the richest fields of existence, where cheap fuel and an over growing market, enable them to compete with others. Let our citizens be up and doing, and continually on the lookout to secure institutions which will add volume to our business and value to real estate and wages. The failure of the gas fields will prove our fortune if we are active and enterprising enough to secure it.—Anniston Hot Blast.

FORESTY AND FINANCE.

The Value of Our Forests and the Importance of Their Protection.

A Change Demanded in Our Monetary System.—New Name for Big Stone Gap Suggested.

For the Big Stone Gap Post, by J. AUSTIN SPERRY.

In the early part of the present century the popular belief was that our forests were inexhaustible. Indeed that idea is too prevalent to this day.

The early settler regarded the forest as his natural antagonist. He fought it with axe and fire to win from it land for agricultural purposes. In this contest great was the destruction of noble trees which it had required centuries to mature.

When manufactures sprang up to supply the wants of prosperous agriculture, and wood was needed for innumerable purposes, the onslaught on the forests was redoubled. Even the rugged hills, unfit for agriculture, were unroofed, destroying the carpeting of nature which had caught and held the rainfall till it percolated through the soil and bubbled from their rocky sides in crystal springs, which ran down and irrigated the fruitful valleys.

In place of this beneficent arrangement, the bounty of the heavens now furrows the barred hillsides and rushes in devastating floods through the valleys, leaving the earth athirst and barren.

For many years civilization and progress have warred with virgin forests with these results:

As the eastern and northern states became de-forested their rich agricultural lands became sterile, the tillers of the soil emigrated and the manufacturing population which succeeded them now imports both food and lumber.

In the middle states the same process is palpably but steadily going on. In Maryland the best timber has everywhere been culled, and her industries are suffering from the deterioration and extinction of local supplies.

In West Virginia the forests have been removed from the counties bordering on the Ohio river, and mills and manufacturing establishments are languishing or suspended from exhaustion of material that was supposed limitless. As yet but slight inroads have been made upon the magnificent body of the hard woods in the extreme southwestern counties of the state.

The mountain region of Southwest Virginia contains immense quantities of original oak, hickory, walnut, cherry, and other hardwoods. The streams are unsuited to carry the timber to market, but, of late years, railroads have penetrated this region and the inroads made upon the timber supply justify the most serious apprehensions.

An admirable treatise written by Prof. Fernow, Chief of the Forestry Division of the U. S. Agricultural Department, is replete with facts in regard to our forest resources, and their proper management, which may be read with profit and interest.

In Bulletin No. 5 of the Agricultural Department, entitled "What is Forestry?" Prof. Fernow says of the value of the forest product in the United States:

"The total annual product of wood material of all sorts consumed in the United States may be valued in round numbers at \$1,000,000,000, representing, roughly speaking, 25,000,000,000 cubic feet of wood, or the annual increase of the wood growth of 50,000,000 acres forest in fair condition. This value exceeds ten times the value of our gold and silver output, and three times the annual product of all our mineral and coal mines put together. It is three times the value of our wheat crop; and with all the toil and risk which our agricultural crops involved they can barely quadruple the value of this product yielded by nature for the mere harvesting."

"If to the value of our total mining product be added the value of stone quarries and petroleum, and this sum be increased by the estimate value of all the steamboats, sailing vessels, canal boats, flatboats, and barges plying in American waters and belonging to citizens of the United States, it will still be less than the value of the forest product by a sum sufficient to purchase at cost of construction all the canals, buy up at par all the stock of the telegraph companies, pay their bonded debts, and construct and equip all the telephone lines. The value of the annual forest exceeds the gross income of all the railroad and transportation companies. It would suffice to pay the indebtedness of all the States, if we leave out New York and Pennsylvania, including that of all counties, townships, school districts, and cities within those States (in 1880); and it would more than wipe out the remaining public debt of the

United States. In fact, ranking manufactures of all kinds and agriculture as respectively first and second in importance, as far as production of values goes, the forest product occupies the third place. This was the case according to the census of 1880. It is claimed that since then the lumber industry has enlarged to such an extent as to make its product second, if not first in value."

In the same pamphlet he says:

"The favorable influence which the forest growth exerts in preventing the washing of the soil and in retarding the torrential flow of water, and also in checking the winds and thereby reducing rapid evaporation, further in facilitating subterranean drainage and influencing climatic conditions, on account of which it is desirable to preserve certain parts of the natural forest growth and extend it elsewhere—this favorable influence is due to the dense cover of foliage mainly, and to these mechanical obstructions which the trunks and the litter of the forest floor offer."

Any kind of tree growth would answer this purpose, and all the forest management necessary would be to simply abstain from interference and leave the ground to nature's kindly action.

"This was about the idea of the first advocates of forest protection in this country; Keep out fire, keep out cattle, keep out the ax of man, and nothing more is needed to keep our mountains under forest cover forever."

"But would it be rational and would it be necessary to withdraw a large territory from human use in order to secure this beneficial influence? It would be, indeed, in many localities, if the advantages of keeping it under forest could not be secured simultaneously with the employment of the soil for useful production, but rational forest management secures both the advantages of favorable forest conditions and the production of useful material. Not only is the rational cutting of the forest not antagonistic to favorable forest conditions, but in skillful hands the latter can be improved by the judicious use of the ax."

"In fact the demands for forest preservation on the mountains and the methods of forest management for profit in such localities are more or less harmonious; thus the absolute clearing of the forest on steep hillsides, which is apt to lead to desiccation and washing of the soil, is equally detrimental to a profitable forest management, necessitating, as it does, replanting under difficulties."

"Forest preservation, then, does not, as seems to be imagined by many, exclude proper forest utilization, but on the contrary these may well go hand in hand, preserving forest conditions while securing valuable material; the first requirement only modifies the manner, in which the second is satisfied."

Appropos to the consistency of forest utilization with forest preservation is the following from the 9th volume of the Tenth census Report.

"The forest wealth of the country is still undoubtedly enormous. Great as it is, however, it is not inexhaustible, and the forests of the United States, in spite of their extent, variety and richness, and in spite of the fact that the climatic conditions of a large portion of country are peculiarly favorable to the development of forest growth cannot always continue productive if the simplest laws of nature governing their growth be totally disregarded."

"The judicious cutting of a forest in a climate like that of the Atlantic or Pacific regions entail no serious or permanent loss. A crop ready for the benefit of the community; trees which have reached their prime are cut in stead of being allowed to perish naturally, and others take their place. The permanence of the forest in regions better suited for the growth of trees than for general agriculture may thus be insured. Two causes, however, are constantly at work destroying the permanence of the forest of the country and threatening their total extinction as sources of natural prosperity. Fire and browsing animals inflict a greater amount of injury on the forests of the country than the ax, recklessly and wastefully as it is generally used against them."

The documents quoted from contain much valuable information in regard to our forests resources and their proper management, which is commended to the thoughtful reader.

The facts which I wish to emphasize here are these:

The most valuable hardwood forests remaining on the continent exist in Sonshwestern Virginia, and the adjacent counties in West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee.

The Appalachian city growing up at Big Stone Gap is the center of this magnificent region of forest wealth.

This embryo mountain metropolis has also at its very doors apparently inexhaustible mines of iron ore and coal. Limestone and other material for the successful manufacture of iron abound.

From these natural advantages the people of the Appalachian city anticipate its future growth, prosperity and greatness.

The citizens and promoters of the place, however, do not seem to fully appreciate the chief of these advantages, namely, that the forest-covering of the surrounding peaks, judiciously preserved and managed, is capable of yielding an annual crop far exceeding in value the output of the mines.

Legislation, either state or national, cannot preserve these grand and valuable forests. It can only be done by the enlightened selfishness of the owners of the soil. A campaign of education is needed. A good beginning for this would be the formation of a forestry association at Big Stone Gap.

Right here the inquiry is pertinent whether the development of mines and the manufacture of iron by the aid of foreign capital enriches or impoverishes a country.

This brings us to the second branch of our subject—Finance.

There is no law to prevent a man from doing what he please with his own property.

If the goose which lays him the golden egg be his goose, he may kill it if he chooses.

If John Doe needs ready money, or thinks he does, and the primeval forest upon the mountain-top be his, why should he not hew it down and send it to market, even though the farm of Richard Roe, in the valley, be ruined by the operation?

If Richard Roe has coal or iron, or other minerals upon his property, what good does it do him, or the world at large if it cannot be mined and brought to market?

John Doe has killed his goose, and it lays him no more eggs.

Richard Roe, for capital to develop his mines gives their great income in perpetuity to strangers. He squanders, for temporary gain, the heritage of his children.

Both John Doe and Richard Roe, like Esau of old, have sold their birthrights for a mess of pottage. Was there no other way for John and Richard to get money for present needs, and yet preserve their forests and develop their mines?

Under our present financial system it seems not. Our national currency is the soundest and safest that could be devised. The debentures of the nation are not only pledged, but deposited in the treasury for its redemption.

But it lacks the essential qualities of flexibility. It has a tendency to accumulate at certain points, and to flow in certain channels that do not lead to towards John Doe and Richard Roe. They have to seek it where it is hoarded, and submit to the hard conditions imposed by its custodians. This is why they have to sacrifice, the one his ancestral woods and the other the usufruct of his mines. Stupendous usury!

But this inflexible national currency is about to go out of existence, for the reason that the bonds upon which it is based will soon mature and be taken up. Some other system of currency will have to be substituted. Will Congress repeal the tax upon the notes of state banks, thus perishing them to furnish us with a flexible or elastic currency? State bank currency is not a local currency (which is objectionable), but its expansions and contractions are local, so that a plethora or stringency in one section does not affect the whole country.

With a national banking law compelling state banks to keep their notes at par with specie, and to protect the note-holders by depositing securities either in the national or state treasury, Congress meanwhile maintaining the parity of gold and silver, the currency problem would be satisfactorily settled.

Home companies, aided by the state banks, could develop the resources of the country, avoiding the curse of absentee landlordism and perpetual tribute to foreign syndicates.

Let the people of southwestern Virginia inscribe upon their banner, "State Banks and Forest Preservation," and march to opulence. The region abounding in such valuable hardwoods and inexhaustible mines of coal and iron cannot fail, if these resources are rightly husbanded, to become the garden spot of America.

The city * located in the center of all this natural wealth, amidst the most magnificent scenery in the world, with railroad facilities in every direction, must become the site of great industries, which, if the wisdom of providing for future enduring

prosperity prevails over the shortsighted policy of present gain, cannot suffer decay from the "deterioration or extinction of local supplies."

* Shakespear to the contrary notwithstanding, there is something in a name. To strangers "Big Stone Gap," as a corporate name contains no more exalted idea than that of a country postoffice and a grocery store. How would "Appalachia" sound as the name of a beautiful and important mountain city?

Sergeant Letter.

SERGEANT, Ky., March 18, 1893.
Editor Post:
Cool weather just now and plenty of snow.

Den Craft left Tuesday for Salyersville, where he will be absent for several weeks.

Laura, infant girl of D. G. Spangler, is past all hopes of recovery.

Robert S. Webb, of Pikeville, was over the first of the week, on business.

Sheriff Collins and Wilson Sergeant left Sunday for Frankfort, where they will land in the penitentiary several Letcher convicts.

W. B. Webb went to Mouth of Kings' Creek Sunday and returned via Whitesburg.

S. T. Webb left Sunday for Line Fork, where he will teach a term of School. We wish for him abundant success.

Morgan Bowling, of Hobbs, Va., is here this week, buying cattle.

Nelt. Craft, of Craftville, was here Sunday visiting, his best "gall."

Jason L. and James A. Craft left Tuesday for Salyersville.

Elds. W. R. Craft and Peter Adkins preached at the church house here Sunday.

James A. Craft visited his best girl at Colly Monday.

S. E. Hannouns has just returned from Olinger, Va.

John S. Webb went to see his girl to-day.

E. A. Holbrook left Thursday for Norton, Va.

Henry Baker and family, of Baker, returned from Herndon, Saline Co., Mo. last week. They have been living in the west for over a year, and are not pleased with it.

Splitting rails and fencing is the order of the day.

Will Blair and Geors Adams, of Colly, are off on busines to Norton, Va.

Mathew Dotson, of Wise C. H., will preach at Colly tomorrow.

May the Post live long and prosper.

"Re-Box."

Buried the Devil.

[From the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.]

The devil will no longer beguile the heart of man. Thornton Carter, the Coloma Messiah, has buried him, or one of him. The formal ceremony took place near Watervliet, Mich., on the 9th inst. He was assisted by Nanasseh Burbank, whose devil it was that was interred. Burbank belonged to the Shouting Methodists, and was so radical that he objected to the feather on the women's hats and to the Sunday go-to-meetin' clothes. He was such a nuisance that the Methodists asked him to shut up, and he decided to join the Carterites. Carter ruled that Burbank must bury the devil that inhabited his body before he could belong to the select. Two men, therefore, walked solemnly into an open field, Carter carrying the devil, as he claimed, in his hands. Burbank dug a large hole. The Messiah offered an interminably long prayer, and then said:

"Satan, stand forth. For many years hast thou plagued this immortal soul, never till now regenerate. Hast thou aught to say, why I should not consign thee to oblivion?"

The devil was silent.

"By thy silence dost thou condemn thyself!" exclaimed Carter, "so down thou goest, most damnable fiend; here we bury thee forever."

Carter thrust the devil into the hole, and Burbank hastily covered it up. The two are creating much stir among the ignorant here,

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If you had this much space to fill up; no special news to fill it and was in a hurry don't you think you'd do it just about this way?